

HB 51 -- COMMUNITY RELATIONS TRAINING PROGRAM FOR PEACE OFFICERS

SPONSOR: Walton Gray

This bill establishes the Community Relations Training Program for Peace Officers. In addition to training in diversity, sensitivity, and cultural competency, the program will provide peace officers with training aimed toward maintaining open avenues of communication between communities and police departments throughout Missouri.

All peace officers will be required to attend training on community relations, diversity, sensitivity, and cultural dependency upon hire and every three years. The training will include discipline, public information activity, and efficient front-line police work.

Each state licensed training center will be responsible for developing a curriculum for the training as specified in the bill. The curriculum must be taught by a law enforcement officer who has experience and maintains liaisons with communities throughout Missouri and must be a member of the community relations division.

The Department of Public Safety must create a Community Relations Division consisting of at least:

- (1) Two police chiefs;
- (2) Two sheriffs; and
- (3) One person who will be a chief executive officer of a certified training academy to perform the duties required of the division.

The Community Relations Division must:

- (1) Coordinate quarterly forums with various community groups, including groups of different racial and ethnic backgrounds and youth and clergy throughout the state;
- (2) Conduct community surveys periodically throughout cities, town, and villages in this state to determine the satisfaction of services by law enforcement within the cities, towns, and villages;
- (3) Attend various meetings held by cities, towns, and villages throughout the state;
- (4) Act as a liaison with community activists and leaders throughout Missouri;

(5) Attend lawful demonstrations; and

(6) Respond to the scene of high-profile incidents, such as law enforcement-related deaths or injuries or major confrontations between police and the public.

The bill creates the Community Relations Training Fund for Peace Officers. This fund must be used solely for the administration of this section.

The provisions of this bill will expire six years after the effective date.